

Message Text

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22 10

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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R 090825Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5915

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 0116

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AO, CG, US, UR

SUBJ: ANGOLA: DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN KINSHASA

1. DURING COURTESY CALL JANUARY 7 I FOUND SOVIET AMBASSADOR LAVROV -- WHO HAS REPUTATION FOR BEING TOUGH AND AT TIMES UNPLEASANT -- ALL SWEETNESS AND LIGHT. HE TOOK NOTABLY CONCILIATORY LINE TOWARD ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT, NOTING WITH REGRET THAT "ANGOLA COMPLICATIONS" HAD SO FAR PREVENTED RESCHEDULING MOBUTU'S VISIT TO MOSCOW (WHICH HAD BEEN ABRUPTLY CANCELLED BY THE SOVIETS IN DECEMBER 1974). IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY RE THE USSR'S CURRENT POSITION ON ANGOLA, LAVROV RECOUNTED STANDARD SOVIET VERSION OF HOW THE ANGOLAN SITUATION HAD EVOLVED LAST YEAR AND THEN REFERRED TO THE JANUARY 3 PRAVDA EDITORIAL AS REPRESENTING HIS GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT VIEW. I SAID I HAD READ A SUMMARY OF THE EDITORIAL BUT IT STILL WAS NOT CLEAR TO ME WHAT IT MEANT: WOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, THE USSR FAVOR NEGOTIATIONS FOR SOME SORT OF COALITION GOVERNMENT REPRESENTING ALL THREE MOVEMENTS? AFTER MORE BACKING AND FILLING, LAVROV SAID THE PRAVDA PIECE MEANS THAT THE SOVIET UNION "DOES NOT EXCLUDE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION" IN ANGOLA. HE REPEATED THIS TWICE AGAIN, BUT DID NOT ELABORATE FURTHER.

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2. LAVROV REFRAINED FROM ANY DIRECT CRITICISM OF THE

US, AND HE MADE A POINT OF PROFESSING HIS DEVOTION TO
DETENTE.

3. COMMENT: I REPORT THE ABOVE ONLY IN THE CHANCE THAT
ANY OF IT MEANS MORE TO OUR SOVIET EXPERTS THAN MEETS
THE EYE HERE. AS DEPT AWARE, LAVROV HAS BEEN IN HOT
WATER HERE SINCE THE GOZ PUBLICLY ACCUSED THE SOVIETS
SEVERAL WEEKS AGO OF THREATENING ZAIRE'S SECURITY BY
ARMS BUILD-UP IN NEIGHBORING TERRITORIES; HE PROBABLY
HOPED HIS CONCILIATORY WORDS RE ZAIRE WOULD REACH GOZ.

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